The Removal of Doubts, Regarding the Closing of the Fingers During Tashah-hud.

A Translation of:

رَفْعُ التَّرَدُّدِ فِيْ عَقْدِ الْاَصَابِعِ عِنْدِ التَّشَهُّدِ، لِلْاِمَامِ الْجَلِيْلِ، مُحَمَّد اَمِيْن، اَلْمَعْرُوْفُ بِابْنِ عَابِدِيْن، عَلَيْهِ رَحْمَةُ اَرْحَمِ الرَّاحِمِيْن

(A Kitaab of `Allaamah ibn `Aabideen ash-Shaami.)

By: Muhammed Huzaifah ibn Adam Aal-Ebrahim.

All Praises are due to Allaah Alone, the One Whom all things in existence bear witness to His Oneness. Salaah (Salutations) and Salaam (Peace) be upon His servant and Rasool (Messenger), the possessor of numerous Clear Miracles. Salaah and Salaam be also upon his family, the possessors of Miracles and Specialities. Salaah and Salaam be upon all of them so long as the heavens and the earth remain in existence.

Thereafter, the Prisoner of Sins and Faults, Muhammad Ameen ibn `Aabideen – may His Mowlaa (Master; Creator; Sustainer; Cherisher; Nourisher; Provider) cover him with His numerous bounties – says:

"This is a treatise in which I have gathered some of the statements of our Trustworthy A'immah (plural of Imaam), regarding the pointing of the index finger and circling of the other fingers during the position of Tashah-hud in Salaah.

What caused me to compile this treatise was what I saw of the Hanafiyyah of contemporary times agreeing upon the mere pointing with the index finger, whilst abandoning the making of the circle with the other fingers, despite the fact that our `Ulamaa proved joining both of them (pointing with the index finger and making a circle with the other fingers) to be Sunnah with clear evidences.

I have named it "The Removal of Doubts, Regarding the Closing of the Fingers During Tashah-hud", hoping from the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth goodness of the intention (in authoring this Kitaab), fulfilment of the wish (to author it), that he allows good work to be completed and raises the rank (of the author), and that he makes my last words the Kalimah of Shahaadah at the time of death, for indeed He is the One Who is Most Near, All-Hearing and the Answerer of Du`aas (Supplications).

The Imaam, the Protector of the Deen, An-Nasafi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, stated in the text of "Kanz":

"And when he (The Musalli) completes the second Sajdah of the second Rak`ah, he should spread his left leg and sit upon it, raise his right foot (with his toes flat on the floor and sit on it) and spread his fingers (upon his knees)." [End of quote from Kanz.]

The texts of all other (Hanafi) Fiqh Kitaabs are the same as this, and what is apparent from it is that he should spread his fingers from the beginning of the Tashah-hud until the end without making a circle with his fingers and without pointing (with his index finger) at the time of reciting the Shahaadah. Furthermore, many of the As-haab al-Fataawaa (Those Qualified to Issue Fataawaa) have stated that the Fatwaa of the Madh-hab is upon this opinion.

This is in conformity with the opinion of the Muhaqqiq (Verifier) of "Sadr-ush-Sharee`ah", who also chose it. He stated in his "Al-Wiqaayah" that the Musalli should place his hands upon his thighs and face his fingers in the direction of the Qiblah, spread out. He also stated in his Sharh (Commentary) that this is contrary to the opinion of Imaam ash-Shaafi`ee رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, who held the view that the Sunnah is that one should close his little finger and ring finger, form a circle with the middle finger and thumb, and point with the index finger at the time of reciting the Shahaadatayn (i.e. Ash-hadu Al-Laa Ilaaha Illallaah, wa Ash-hadu Anna Muhammadan `Abduhu wa Rasooluh). Some of our (Hanafi) `Ulamaa also hold this opinion. [End of his quote from Al-Wiqaayah.]

Al-`Allaamah at-Tumurtaashi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said in "At-Tanweer":

"He (the Musalli) should not point with his index finger at the time of (reciting) the Shahaadah and the Fatwaa is upon this."

However, Al-`Allaamah, Ash-Shaykh `Alaa-ud-Deen, who does the Sharh (Commentary) of his Kitaab, said – and this is found in at-Tajnees, `Umdat-ul-Muftee and the rest of the Kutub of Fataawaa – "The Mu`tamad (Relied

Upon Opinion) is that which the Shurraah (Commentators) have (agreed upon and) authenticated as well as the Muta'akh-khiroon (later `Ulamaa) such as Imaam al-Kamaal, Imaam al-Halabi, Imaam al-Bahnasi, Imaam al-Baaqaani, Shaykh-ul-Islaam al-Jadd رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِm as well as others, that he (the Musalli) is to point (with his finger at the time of reciting the Shahaadah in the position of Tashah-hud) due to Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم having done so, and they have attributed this (opinion) of Imaam Muhammad and Imaam (Abu Haneefah) رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِمَا.

Another opinion is stated in "Durar-ul-Bihaar" and its Sharh (Commentary), "Ghurar-ul-Adhkaar", that the Muftaa Bihee (The Official Fatwaa of the Madh-hab) according to us (The Ahnaaf) is that he should point (when reciting the Shahaadah in the Tashah-hud) with all of his fingers.

Again, it appears in "Ash-Shurunbulaaliyyah" from "Al-Burhaan" that the authentic opinion is that he points with his index finger alone; he raises it at the time of "Nafi" (i.e. when he says "Laa Ilaaha") and puts it down at the time of Ithbaat (i.e. when saying "Illallaah"). We are wary of the opinion which states that pointing is not to be done, as this is contrary to what is known and contrary to the narrations.

In al-`Ayni it is narrated from at-Tuhfah that it (pointing during Ithbaat in the position of Tashah-hud) is Mustahabb, whilst in al-Muheet it is stated to be Sunnah. End of quote from Shaykh `Alaa'-ud-Deen رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

The summary of all this is the reliance upon Ishaarah (pointing) without forming a circle, and this is what the people in our time are upon; however, this is contrary to what I have come across from the Kutub of the Madh-hab, for in them only two opinions are mentioned:

1) Ishaarah (Pointing) is not to be made whatsoever.

2) Ishaarah (Pointing) is to be made whilst forming a circle with the other fingers.

As for that which ascribes this opinion of Ishaarah without `Aqd (forming a circle) to Durar al-Bihaar and its Sharh (Commentary), then what I have found in there is contrary to this claim.

As for the text of al-Burhaan, then it does not contradict that which is found in all the Kutub of the Madh-hab, and we will mention here that which is easy for us, from the texts of our `Ulamaa so that the Maqsood (objective) may become apparent, by the Help of Al-Malik Al-Ma`bood (The King Who is Worshipped, i.e. Allaah).

We say:

It is stated in Munyat al-Musalli that he (The Musalli) should point with the index finger when he reaches the Shahaadatayn during the position of Tashah-hud, and in al-Waaqi`aat it is stated that he should not point, and that if he does so, it should be while forming a circle with the other fingers and keeping the index finger raised.

It is also stated in Munyat al-Musalli that he (the Musalli) should (before the Shahaadatayn) place his hands on his thighs and spread out his fingers.

The commentator of Munyat al-Musalli, Imaam Ibraaheem al-Halabi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in his commentary (Sharh), "Al-Burhaan", that this view (mentioned above) is our view (i.e. the Ahnaaf), and according to Imaam ash-Shaafi`ee رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, the Musalli should (upon commencing the posture of Tashah-hud) spread the fingers of his left hand and close the fingers of his right, excluding the index finger, due to what Imaam Muslim

has narrated from Hadhrat `Abdullaah ibn `Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ, that (he said): "Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم would, when sitting (in Tashah-hud), place his left hand on his left thigh and his right hand on his right thigh, make a circle (with his right hand) and point with the index finger.

As for us, we have what Imaam at-Tirmidhi has narrated form the Hadeeth of Waa'il, who said, "I said (to myself), 'I am going to look carefully how Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم performs Salaah.' When he used to sit for the Tashah-hud, he would spread out his left foot, place his left hand on his left thigh and raise his right foot (he, the narrator, did not mention anything further)."

The meaning of Al-`Aqd (making a circle) which was mentioned in the Riwaayah (narration) of Imaam Muslim, is the making of the circle at the time of Ishaarah (pointing), not throughout the position of Tashah-hud.

In another narration of Imaam Muslim it appears: "He (i.e. Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم) would place his right palm upon his right thigh, close all of his fingers and point with the finger next to the thumb (i.e. the index finger). And there is no doubt that it is not possible to place the palm (on the thigh) whilst closing all of the fingers, so the meaning of it is that the palm is first placed and the fingers are closed after that at the time of Ishaarah (pointing), and this is what has been narrated from Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ regarding the method of al-Ishaarah (pointing).

He (Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) said, "He (the Musalli) closes his little finger and that which is next to it (i.e. the ring finger), makes a circle with the middle finger and the thumb and keeps the index finger raised." This is also what has been narrated from Imaam Abu Yusuf in "Al-Amaalee", and this is from that which authenticates al-Ishaarah (pointing in Tashah-hud).

Many of the Mashaayikh (plural of Shaykh) are of the opinion that Ishaarah is not to be made. However, this opinion is in conflict with that which is known as well as the narrations. As for ad-Diraayah, then (the proof) is what has been mentioned in the authentic Hadeeth. As for the narrations, then Imaam Muhammad mentions that what he had mentioned regarding the method of Ishaarah (pointing) was the Qowl (verdict) of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ; he mentions this in "An-Nihaayah" and other than it.

Imaam Najm-ud-Deen az-Zaahidi said, "Due to the Riwaayaat (narrations) from our companions (i.e. the Ahnaaf) being Ittifaaq (agreed upon) in this matter of it (i.e. pointing during Tashah-hud) being Sunnah, as well as the fact that this is the opinion of the Koofiyyeen (those from Kufa) and the Madaniyyeen (those from Madeenah), and also the fact that the Aathaar (narrations) and Akhbaar (reports) concerning it are so numerous, making `Amal upon it (Ishaarah) is Awlaa (better)."

The method of Ishaarah (pointing), according to Imaam al-Hulwaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, is that he (the Musalli) raises his (index) finger at the time of Nafi (Laa) and places it down at the time of Ithbaat (Illallaah), pointing out towards the two of them (i.e. this action itself also gives the meaning of Nafi and Ithbaat).

And, it is Makrooh for the Musalli to point with both of his index fingers, due to what has been narrated by Imaam at-Tirmidhi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and Imaam An-Nasaa'i رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ from Hadhrat Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ, who said that, "A man made Du`aa with both his fingers (i.e. raising both his index fingers), so Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم said, "One, One!" This is from Al-Burhaan of Imaam al-Halabi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

Imaam as-Saghnaaqi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ writes in An-Nihaayah, the Sharh of Hidaayah:

"Should the Musalli point with his index finger at the time of saying "Ash-hadu Al Laa Ilaaha Illallaah" or not?

From our Shuyookh (the Hanafi `Ulamaa) are those who say that he should not point, as in pointing there is the addition of raising the finger and this is an action which is unnecessary, therefore, abandoning it is better. The reason for this is that Salaah is based on Sakeenah (tranquillity) and dignity.

Others say that the Musalli should point with the index finger (at this time during the Tashah-hud), and there is Nass (Clear Text) from Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ regarding this issue in "Kitaab-ul-Masheekhah"; he narrated to us from Rasoolullaah Sallallaahu `Alayhi was Sallam that he (Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم) used to do this, i.e. point with the index finger. Thereafter, he says, "We do as Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم had done and we take from his actions." This is the Qowl of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and our Qowl."

Thereafter, how should this pointing be done? He (Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) says:

"He (the Musalli) closes his little finger and that which is next to it (i.e. the ring finger), makes a circle with the middle finger and the thumb and points with the index finger." This is also reported by al-Faqeeh Abu Ja`far al-Hinduwaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ that an-Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم used to point in this manner. And what he means by "closing the fingers" is closing the four fingers (of the right hand) and raising the index finger, not other than it (the index finger), in order to give the meaning of Tawheed (Oneness of Allaah Ta`aalaa, pointed out by only raising one finger). This is also how it is mentioned in Mabsoot.

Imaam al-Kaashaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in "Al-Badaa'i`", the Sharh (Commentary) of "At-Tuhfah":

"Some of our companions (the Hanafi `Ulamaa) have said that he (the Musalli) should not point (during Tashah-hud), as in this (pointing) there is the abandonment of the Sunnah of simply placing the hand down (without any addition).

Others say that he should point, as Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in "Kitaab-ul-Masheekhah" that, "It was narrated to us from Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم that he would point with his (index) finger, so we do that which An-Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم had done, and this is the Qowl (Verdict) of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ as well as our Qowl.

In "Adh-Dhakheerah Al-Burhaaniyyah" it is stated:

"Thereafter, when he (the Musalli) is in the position of Tashah-hud and reaches "Ash-hadu Al Laa Ilaaha Illallaah", should he point with the index finger of his right hand or not? This matter was not mentioned (i.e. in the Qur'aan) and our Mashaayikh have differences of opinion regarding it.

From them are those who say that he should not point as Salaah is built upon Sakeenah (tranquillity) and dignity, and from them are those who say that he should point.

Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said, "We do as Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم did." and this is the Qowl of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ as well as our Qowl.

It appears in "Mi`raaj-ud-Diraayah", the Sharh of Hidaayah, that "Some of our Mashaayikh have said that he (the Musalli) should not point."

In "Adh-Dhakheerah" (and it gives the Zhaahir-ur-Riwaayah), "Some of them (the Hanafi `Ulamaa) have said that he (the Musalli) should point." Thereafter, the quote of Imaam Muhammad (ibn al-Hasan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) is mentioned as well as the method of closing the fingers.

Similarly, the Faqeeh, Imaam Abu Ja`far رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ stated that he (Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم) used to point like this, and it is one of the opinions of Imaam ash-Shaafi`ee رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

The People of Madeenah said, "He (the Musalli) should close the three fingers (i.e. the middle, ring and little finger) as well as the fifth (i.e. the thumb) and point with the index finger, and this is one of the opinions of Imaam ash-Shaafi`ee رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

Imaam Abu Ja`far رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said, "What our `Ulamaa (i.e. the Shaafi`ee `Ulamaa) went to is better, for it conforms to the Hadeeth and does not resemble the way the person uses his fingers when counting (in Dhikr), something which does not befit the state of Salaah. Therefore, this way is better." This is how it appears in "Mabsoot" of Shaykh-ul-Islaam.

In "Al-Mujtabaa" it appears, "Due to the numerousness of the Akhbaar (reports) and Aathaar (narrations) and the agreement of the Riwaayaat from all of our As-haab (the Shaafi`ee `Ulamaa) regarding that the Ishaarah is Sunnah, and this is also reported from the Madaniyyeen (the People of Madeenah) and the Koofiyyeen (the People of Kufa), acting upon it is better than leaving it out. And, it is Makrooh for the Musalli to point with the index finger without moving it."

It is reported from Imaam al-Hulwaani رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ that he said, "He (the Musalli) should raise his index finger when saying "Laa Ilaaha" and place it down when saying "Illallaah" so that the raising can be like Nafi (Negation) and the placing down can be like Ithbaat (Affirmation)." End quote from "Mi`raaj-ud-Diraayah".

Al-`Allaamah, Al-Muhaqqiq (The Verifier), Ash-Shaykh Kamaal-ud-Deen ibn al-Humaam رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in "Fath-ul-Qadeer", the Sharh of Hidaayah, that, "In (Saheeh) Muslim it appears that Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم would, when sitting in Salaah (i.e. in Tashah-hud), place his right palm upon his right thigh, spread all of his fingers and point with the finger which is next to the thumb. And he would place his left palm upon his left thigh, and there is no doubt that the placing of the palm (upon the thigh) whilst the fingers are closed is not possible, hence, the meaning of it is – Wallaahu A`lam – that the palm is first placed and thereafter the fingers are closed at the time of Ishaarah (pointing), and this is what has been reported from Imaam Muhammad (ibn al-Hasan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) regarding the method of Ishaarah.

He said, "He (the Musalli) should close the small finger and that which is next to it, make a circle with the middle finger and the thumb and raise the index finger, and this is also reported from Imaam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ in "Al-Amaalee."

Imaam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said that what he had mentioned regarding the method of Ishaarah – which we have transmitted – is the Qowl of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

Imaam Fakhr-ud-Deen az-Zayla`i رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ stated in "At-Tabyeen", the Sharh of "Al-Kanz", that, "They (the Hanafi `Ulamaa) held different opinions regarding the method of placing the right hand. Imaam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ stated in "Al-Amaalee" that he (the Musalli) should close the little finger, make a circle with the middle finger and thumb and point with the index finger. Also, Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ mentioned that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم used to point (in Tashah-hud), and we do as he had done." He also said that this was the Qowl of Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

However, many of the Mashaayikh did not narrate anything about Ishaarah and they stated it to be Makrooh, as stated in "Munyat-ul-Mufti".

It is stated in "Al-Fataawaa" that, "There is no Ishaarah in Salaah except during the position of Tashah-hud, and this is good."

Similar to this is mentioned in the Sharh of "Al-Kanz", by Imaam al-`Ayni رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

It is stated in the Sharh of "Al-Munyat-us-Sagheer", "Should he (the Musalli) point during the Shahaadah according to us (the Ahnaaf) or not? There is Ikhtilaaf (differing opinions) regarding it. What is Saheeh in "Al-Khulaasah" and "Al-Bazzaaziyyah" is that the Musalli should not point (during Tashah-hud), and what is Saheeh in the Sharh of Al-Hidaayah is that he should point, and this is also stated in "Al-Multaqit" and other than it.

Al-`Allaamah, Imaam Shams-ud-Deen al-Quhustaani رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in his Sharh of "Mukhtasar an-Niqaayah" that the absence of Ishaarah is the Zhaahir (apparent) of the Usool of our As-haab (i.e. the Hanafi `Ulamaa), as it appears in "Az-Zaahidi", and the Fatwaa is upon this, as it is in "Al-Mudhmiraat", "Al-Walwaaliji", "Al-Khulaasah" and other than it.

And from all of our As-haab it is mentioned to be Sunnah.

And `Allaamah Muhammad al-Bahnasi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ stated in his Sharh of "Al-Multaqaa":

"He (the Musalli) should point with his index finger (according to the Saheeh view) at the time of Nafi (i.e. when saying Laa Ilaaha) and place it down at the time of Ithbaat (i.e. when saying Illallaah), joining together his ring and little fingerer and making a circle with him thumb and middle finger. This is how it is stated in "Azh-Zhaheeriyyah", and "Sharh an-Niqaayah", and my Sharh "Durar al-Bihaar".

He said in the Sharh of "An-Niqaayah":

"In Munyat-ul-Mufti it is stated that Ishaarah (pointing during Tashah-hud) is Makrooh."

Al-`Allaamah, Al-Muhaqqiq (The Verifier), Shams-ud-Deen ibn Ameer Haaj stated in his Sharh of "Munyat al-Musalli":

"It is stated in "Al-Waaqi`aat" that he (the Musalli) should not point (during the Tashah-hud), and there is Nass (clear text) in "Al-Khulaasah" that it is the chosen opinion, and in Fataawaa Al-Kubraa it appears that the Fatwaa (of the Madh-hab) is upon this (opinion). It (Fataawaa Al-Kubraa) adds that, "In Ishaarah there is the addition of raising (the finger) which is not necessitated, and therefore, leaving it off is better, because Salaah is built upon tranquillity and dignity."

Imaam Abu Daawud رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, Imaam al-Bayhaqi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and other than them, all narrate from Hadhrat Waa'il ibn Hujr رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ that Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم used to – in the position of Tashah-hud – close the small and ring finger, make a circle with the middle finger and thumb, and point with the index finger.

It appears in a Riwaayah (Narration) of Imaam ibn Hibbaan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ in his Saheeh that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم used to close the small finger and that which is next to it (i.e. the ring finger), join between the thumb and middle finger, and raise the one next to it (i.e. the index finger), and make Du`aa with it. It is not far-fetched that this can be the meaning of the Riwaayah of Hadhrat ibn `Umar رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ in Saheeh Muslim, that Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم used to place his right palm upon his right thigh, close all of his fingers and point with the index finger which is next to the thumb.

Imaam al-Mahaali رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, from the Shaafi`ee `Ulamaa, said:

"It is Sunnah that he (the Musalli) should keep his index finger bent during the Ishaarah."

Others said, due to what has been narrated from Imaam Maalik ibn Numayr al-Khuzaa`ee, from his father, that he said, "I saw Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم placing his right hand upon his right thigh, raising his index finger which he was bending." This is narrated by Imaam Abu Daawud رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and was authenticated by Imaam ibn Hibbaan رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and other than him.

"I say, this is not Sareeh (Clear), because it is possible that he saw Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم at the time that he was lowering his finger after having raised it (i.e. at the time of saying "Laa Ilaaha", and Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم was now lowering his finger and therefore it was bent, but the narrator thought he was keeping it like that throughout the Ishaarah). Rather, this is what is Zhaahir (Apparent), Wallaahu Ta`aalaa A`lam." End quote from Imaam ibn Ameer Haaj رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

This is what has been easy for me to compile from the speech of our A'immah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِm in this matter, and the summary of it is that the Zhaahir-ur-Riwaayah is upon the absence of Ishaarah originally, and this is what is clear from the texts.

It is narrated from our Three A'immah, Imam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ, Imaam Abu Yusuf رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ that he (the Musalli) should point during the Tashah-hud, and that he should close his fingers, in the manner that has been explained from the Ikhtilaaf of how it is done, and the apparent of their speech is that he should not open them after closing them, rather he should keep them (his fingers) like that (until the end of the Tashah-hud), because what has been narrated is that closing the fingers should be done, and there was no mention of opening them after that.

The Muta`akh-khiroon `Ulamaa chose this Riwaayah due to it strengthening that which has been narrated from Nabi صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم. It is well-known that every Mujtahid strives to reach the conclusion in any matter which is based on what (according to him) is most authentically narrated from Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم, and for this reason, the `Ulamaa narrate from our Great Imaam (i.e. Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ

عَلَيْهِ تَعَالَى الله) and the rest of the A'immah, that each and every one of them said, "If the Hadeeth is authentic, it is my Madh-hab." This has been narrated by Haafizh ibn `Abdul Barr رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ and other than him.

Therefore, since what has been narrated above (about the correct way according to Ahnaaf of how to perform the Ishaarah in Tashah-hud) has been authentically narrated from Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم, making `Amal (acting upon it) is best. For this reason, Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ said, "We do as Rasoolullaah صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم had done, and this (method of performing Ishaarah in Tashah-hud) is my Qowl and the Qowl of Abu Haneefah."

Imaam Muhammad رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ here attributes this view of his to Imaam Abu Haneefah رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ as well, due to the Riwaayaat (narrations) regarding his view being (according to him) most authentic. So he chose those Riwaayaat which are in conformity with that which has been narrated from Nabi صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم and from all of Al-A'immah Al-Mujtahideen.

Both the view of Ishaarah being necessary and not doing it being necessary are authentic views within the (Hanafi) Madh-hab. Those who say it is necessary are in conformity with the Lawgiver صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم, and for this reason, most of the `Ulamaa of the Muta'akh-khireen chose this view. They held this view, even though the view that it should not be done is stronger from the point of view of what has been narrated from the people (i.e. the `Ulamaa) of the Madh-hab, and I know that those who feel Ishaarah is necessary feel that closing the fingers is necessary, and use as Daleel (evidence) the Qowl of the Muhaqqiq, Imaam ibn al-Humaam رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ as well as that of `Allaamah Al-Burhaan Al-Halabi رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ.

Understand that according to us (the Ahnaaf) there is no such thing as making Ishaarah (pointing) without having first closed the fingers. Rather, they are only two views; 1) Leaving off Ishaarah entirely (which includes leaving off the closing of the fingers), and 2) Ishaarah along with closing the fingers.

`Allaamah Ibraaheem al-Beeree رَحْمَةُ الله تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ states in his Sharh (commentary) of Al-Ashbaah wan-Nazhaa'ir that when there is Ikhtilaaf in any Mas'alah, that which the majority is upon should be considered (i.e. should be followed). Wallaahu Ta`aalaa A`lam.

This is the end of what Al-Mowlaa (i.e. Allaah Ta`aalaa) has made easy in this Risaalah upon His lowly servant, Muhammad `Aabideen, may his Mowlaa pardon him, grant him what he desires, forgive him, his parents, his Mashaayikh and all those who have a Haqq (right) over him. And all praises are due to Allaah, in the beginning, in the end, in apparent, in secret, and may Allaah send salutations upon our master Muhammad صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّم and upon his family and companions.

This was completed in the month of Rajab, in the year 1236 A.H.

And all praises are due to Allaah Alone, the Rabb of all the worlds.